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Prof flabbergasted to hear of his CIA tie

By DEBORAH ORIN

Sociology professor Kurt Lang says he didn't know—and never even suspected—the \$9735 he got for a 1959 study of mind control came from the CIA.

Lang last night confirmed he is the unnamed professor who ran a Queens College study, whose link to the CIA was disclosed earlier this week. In retrospect, he said, the rather obscure little foundation that gave him the money did seem very interested in brainwashing. "I am extremely distressed," said Lang, who now teaches at the State University at Stony Brook. "Had I any inkling about this—it is not only that I would not have taken it, I don't know how to put it—it's the kind of thing that in terms of my outlook on life and politics—and whatnot—is unthinkable."

"I am not a cold warrior," added Lang. He said the graduate student who helped him with the study "will tear her hair out."

Lang was quick to say, and Queens College officials confirmed, that his project was all secondary research, a survey of available material on mass movements and mass behavior. It was, he said, hardly the lurid experiments with LSD and other mind-altering drugs linked to some CIA and Army research—and to two deaths.

Lang got the money through the stodgy sounding Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology. It had, he recalled, modest offices in Forest Hills and supposedly

was financially backed by a doctor with a very lucrative practice.

The society didn't seem to care much about his research once he got started. Lang said, and went out of business without asking him for a final report. So he used the material in his book, "Collective Dynamics."

"I don't think it had any payoff for them," he added. "What I concluded was that it ain't that easy to change human beings—human beings are what they are."

Lang said the CIA never told him it was involved in the study; not even when it told Queens College about the research project—clearly his—that had gotten

secret CIA money through an unidentified "society."

"It's not very good for academic freedom to have these covert things," said Robert Rischelhueber, former editor of the Queens College newspaper, Newsbeat, who uncovered documents linking the CIA money to Lang's project.

Queens College Acting President Nathan Siegel said, "the CIA seemed to be playing a game when it formally notified him that an unnamed professor had gotten agency funds, but then specified just what kind of work was involved."

Meanwhile, Lang has a new "research" project lined up: "I would like to know more about this. I'd like to tell the Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology and how they ended up giving me money."